

September 9, 2011

Administrative Office

15 Bank Row, Suite C Greenfield MA 01301 Phone: 413-774-3934 Fax: 413-774-3946

www.literacyproject.org TTY 413-774-3934

Classroom sites:

Amherst

c/o Jewish Community of Amherst 724 Main Street

Greenfield 15 Bank Row

North Quabbin 34 No. Main Street, Orange

Northampton James House Community Learning

Center 42 Gothic Street

Ware

23 West Main Street (Warren offsite class -Quaboag Regional HS) Nathaniel Malloy Amherst Planning Department Amherst Town Hall, 2nd Floor 4 Boltwood Avenue Amherst, MA 01002

Greetings Mr. Malloy and the Amherst Planning Department,

Enclosed is The Literacy Project's human service funding application for the Town of Amherst FY 2012 Community Development Block Grant.

We request funds to provide 60 low- and moderate-income Amherst residents with the services of a Transitions Counselor through our Amherst site's Passport to Success Transitions Program. Participants will have no high school credential and/or outdated post-secondary/job skills. The Transitions Counselor will provide individualized and group guidance and skill-building instruction to help participants stay (or enroll) in classes to earn a GED and prepare for the move to post-secondary education/training and family-sustaining work.

In our economy that now requires a GED and more to succeed, and with the continued economic downturn, it is critical that Amherst's lower-skilled residents have access to services that combine the academic instruction, skills training and guidance they need to pursue education and employment as a means to self-sufficiency and economic security. Our clients' successes benefit others' lives as well as their own, as they contribute more to their families, local workforce, and community.

We look forward to the possibility of working with the Town of Amherst to help keep the doors of opportunity open for Amherst residents who are ready to move their lives forward. Thank you for your consideration.

Judith Roberts

Sincerely,

Executive Director

ORIGINAL

Cover Sheet - Social Service Activity

AGENCY NAME: The Literacy Project, Inc.

AGENCY ADDRESS: 15 Bank Row, Suite C, Greenfield MA 01301

AGENCY PHONE NO: 413-774-3934 CONTACT PERSON: Judith Roberts, Exec. Dir.

CONTACT PERSON EMAIL: iroberts@literacyproject.org

2012 CDBG REQUEST: \$30,143

- 1. Project Name Passport to Success Transitions Program
- 2. Project Description (1-2 sentences) This project will serve 60 low- and moderate-income Amherst residents who have no high school credential and/or outdated post-secondary/job skills. Clients will receive individualized and group guidance and skill-building instruction with a staff Transitions Counselor to help them stay in school to earn a GED and prepare for post-secondary education/training and work as a means to economic self-sufficiency and security.
- 3. Project Location The Literacy Project's Amherst site (at Jewish Community of Amherst, 724 Main St.) for 10 hours a week and at Amherst Survival Center for 2 hours a week
- 4. Budget Request \$30,143
- 5. Type of Activity (check one):
- ☐ Homelessness and sheltering
- ☐ Youth development and afterschool care
- √ Adult education and job training
- ☐ Emergency & preventive services: emergency rental assistance, emergency fuel assistance, emergency food and emergency shelter services that can include case management and coordination.
- ☐ Other please explain
- 6. Demonstrate Consistency with Community Development Strategy Services provided by the Transitions Counselor address the following in Priority 3, "Community Services": employment counseling; financial literacy; case management, youth development, case coordination and information and referral services; other critical information. Services indirectly benefit clients' families, by enabling clients to be better providers as well as better educational, career and community-involvement role models.
- 7. Describe how you will ensure that participants meet low/moderate income requirements We will use a version of the attached form (or a form provided by Town of Amherst).
- 8. National Objective

Benefit to low- and moderate-income persons On average, each client will complete 2 activities that lead to completion of the following major outcomes: enroll in a college degree or certificate program, enroll in job training, obtain a job, raise, or promotion.

Estimate the number of low- and moderate-income persons to benefit from the Project: 60

Total number of individuals served 60

Total Low/Mod individuals served 60

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT QUESTIONNAIRE

<u>The Literacy Project -Northampton - Participants from July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011</u> *NOTE - New Income guidelines as of Spring 2010

	1. Whe	re is your principal residence			•			
	2 11		Address		Town			
		many persons are in your househ		—	`.			
		you a single-parent head of housel		No				
	•	s to # 3, (please circle).	Male	Female	:			
		you disabled or handicapped?	Yes	No				
	6. Which of the following most nearly approximates the annual household income in the home where you currently reside? (Please check appropriate line)							
P	1 person	\$0 - \$16,450		5 persons	\$0 - \$25,350			
	•	\$16,450 – 27,400		o percons	\$25,350 - 42, 25 0			
		\$27,400 - 43,800 over \$43,800			\$42,250 - 67,600			
		0761 \$45,800			over \$67,600			
7	2 persons	\$0 - \$18,800 <u> </u>		6 persons	\$0 - \$27,250			
		\$18,800 - 31,300 \$31,300 - 50,050			\$27,250 - 45,400 \$45,400 - 72,600			
		over \$50,050			over \$72,600			
3	3 persons	\$0 - \$21,150		7 persons	\$0 - \$29,100			
	-	\$21,150 - 35,200			\$29,100 – 48,500			
		\$35,200 - 56,300 over \$56,300			\$48,500 - 77,600			
		0,000,000			over \$77,600			
4	persons	\$0 - \$23,450 <u> </u>		8 persons	\$0 - \$31,000			
		\$23,450 - 39,100 \$39, 100 - 62,550			\$31,000 - 51,650 \$51,650 — 81,950			
		over \$62,550			over \$82,600			
	7. Please	indicate your race from the options belo	ow.					
					*NOTE - Hispanic is considered a cultural			
		Black/Af	rican American _	-	background or ethnicity and not a race. Check			
			Asian _	_	here, in addition to one of the other options, if			
		American Indian/	_	_	you consider yourself to have an Hispanic			
	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific I			-	ethnicity or cultural background. []			
		A Black/African Amer	sian and White _	_				
	Americar	n Indian/Alaskan Native and Black/Afr		- 1				
	1 tilloi loui	American Indian/Alaskan Na	_	- 1				
			Other _	- ,				
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Massachusetts CDBG Program FY 2012 - Amherst - Social Service Funding Application

The Literacy Project Passport to Success Transitions Program: Preparing Amherst Adult Basic Education Clients to Make the Transition to Post-Secondary Education/Training and Work

A. Project Description

The Literacy Project (TLP) requests \$30,143 to fund 63 weeks of Passport to Success Transitions Program services for 60 low- and moderate-income Amherst residents as part of our free, comprehensive Adult Basic Education (ABE) services; transitions services include individualized and group counseling and skill building with a staff Transitions Counselor to help clients pursue education and career goals. The Transitions Counselor position is presently minimally funded by a WIA Youthworks grant for 6 hours of service a week, covering only 18-21 year olds, a small portion of our clientele; CDBG funding will ensure funding the Transitions Counselor position for 12 hours a week, including 2 outreach hours a week at Amherst Survival Center (Source A - support letter). Passport to Success provides vital support for students enrolled in TLP classes (basic literacy/pre-GED/ GED/GED online) as well as for other residents who need support to set and pursue education and career goals.

The Transitions Counselor helps clients:

- Take steps to overcome barriers that prevent them from prioritizing their GED studies or their post-secondary and career planning Along with needing to improve their education levels and work prospects, many TLP clients face challenges such as the need for housing, food or child care; yet they often don't know that there is a network of community resources that can help, or they don't feel confident accessing these. The Transitions Counselor assesses clients' needs for other services and connects clients with the appropriate services. The Transition's Counselor's outreach work at Amherst Survival Center will also include referring clients who lack a high school credential to TLP classes or other options as needed.
- Explore post-secondary education/training and career options, set goals, and build the skills and community connections needed to pursue their goals - Many clients will lack a high school credential. Some (such as low-skilled/displaced workers or homemakers needing to re/enter the workforce) may have a high school credential but lack up-to-date computer, job search or workplace skills. For all of these individuals, the world of post-secondary education and a job market increasingly composed of "middle skill" jobs (those requiring more than a high-school credential but not a 4-year degree - see source B) can seem intimidating and out of reach. The Transition's Counselor's work bridges what can otherwise be a daunting divide, helping clients to gain the skills and community connections* needed to move on to the next phase of their lives prepared and confident, and thus more likely to persist and succeed. (*Transitions skills training includes: technical skills such as computer literacy; skills to complete job/college/financial aid applications; job search and interviewing skills; "soft skills" such as time management, teamwork, decision making, and communication; financial literacy skills such as budgeting and managing credit (see support letter - source R). Community connections are forged through: referrals to the Career Center and community college/vocational programs; college and job field trips; and workshops with post-secondary, career search, and employer representatives.)

B. Community's Need for Proposed Project/Program

The need: Transitions guidance to help Adult Basic Education (ABE) clients stay in school to earn a GED and prepare for the next steps of post-secondary education/training and a career In 2007-2008, Community Action! of the Franklin, Hampshire, and North Quabbin Regions conducted a needs assessment with community members, organizations and leaders. The resulting Action Plan reports a correlation between low income and high school dropout. (C38-9); and while a GED is a critical first step for those lacking a high school diploma, in today's economy, in which "a worker must have at least an associate-level degree to command a living wage" (C38) the GED alone is not enough. Foundational research by NCSALL (National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy), however, found that most GED holders do not go on to college or vocational training despite the desire to, that GED programs should be much more tightly linked to additional education and training, and that adult education programs should focus more resources on low-skilled students. (D62,72,78-9; E1-3) ABE clients typically have low skill levels and also face many other barriers to advancing their education and employment. Of the Action Plan survey respondents who had not been in education or work training during the past year, 75% reported encountering barriers, including: lack of transportation, money, and childcare; health problems; and fear of being unable to do the work. (C40) Other common challenges that ABE clients face include: learning disabilities; insufficient English fluency for post-secondary education/training and work; inadequate health care; homelessness; addiction; lack of skills, confidence and/or an effective personal support network to identify and carry out productive next steps.

Why this project is important: This project addresses our ABE clients' critical need to receive the support and guidance of a Transitions Counselor in order to succeed in earning a GED and in preparing for their next steps. It builds a bridge to the additional education and training that NCSALL advocates and to economic self-sufficiency.

Evidence of severity of need - Massachusetts In 2005, the National Center for Education Statistics reported significant percentages of Massachusetts adults testing at "Below Basic" and "Basic" skill levels on several scales: 32% in prose literacy, such as understanding a news article; 26% in document literacy, such as completing a job application; and 46% in quantitative literacy, such as balancing a checkbook. (F) According to Mass. Institute for a New Commonwealth (MassINC), in 2000 more than 1.1 million of the state's 3.2 million workers lacked the skills to perform in the rapidly changing economy: 280,000 were high-school dropouts lacking necessary skills; 667,000 had a high school credential but lacked basic skills to perform in the typical 21st century workplace; 195,000 were immigrants with limited English speaking skills. (F) The need appears even more severe in light of the fact that middle-skill jobs now represent the largest share of the state's jobs and a substantial share of future openings (B4).

Evidence of severity of need – Amherst and Hampshire County Area American Community Survey (ACS) estimates for 2005-2009 and other data indicate needs in this area related to low education levels, poverty, and un/underemployment:

ACS reports the following for Amherst residents: more than 600 age 25 and over have no high school credential and more than 1,500 have no more than that; more than 10,000 (29%) are below poverty level, nearly 3 times the statewide rate; more than 6,000 age 5 and over speak a language other than English at home (a potential indicator of the need to improve both English and cultural fluency in order to pursue education, family-sustaining work and meaningful

- participation in a new community). (G,H)
- The "Self Sufficiency Standard" (SSS) identifying family income levels needed in a given place to cover the cost of living, working, raising a family, and paying taxes without public or private help shows: for a family of 1 adult, an infant and preschool-age child in Hampshire County in 2006, the annualized average weekly wage was \$36,192 vs. a \$52,509 SSS; for 2 minimum-wage adults with a preschool and school-age child, the 2006 county wage was \$28,080 vs. a \$55,170 SSS. (C30,33)
- The Mass. Dept of Workforce Development reports 7.4% unemployment for the Amherst Center micropolitan NECTA for June 2011. In March 2010, it reported lower than average wages in the Franklin/ Hampshire area as compared to state rates: of 3,328 people collecting unemployment, 32.8% earned less than \$500 a week on their previous job compared to 30.2% for the state, and only 24.2% had weekly wages above \$1,000 a week vs. 30.7% for the state. (I; J1)

Lastly, the digital divide remains a very real barrier for adult learners in the 21st century digital economy (U.S. Dept. of Commerce, www2.ntia.doc.gov/node/770, National Coalition for Literacy, http://blog.ncladvocacy.org/2011/03/2842/); this issue is inextricably connected with issues of low education levels, poverty, and un/underemployment. For this reason, TLP emphasizes computer literacy instruction and is requesting 3 laptops for classroom use in the grant budget.

TLP/Amherst enrollments also demonstrate need. In FY11, the classroom served 31 Amherst residents (24 were newly enrolled and 7 were either continuing from the previous year or had returned after stopping their participation before program completion).

Affected population Program beneficiaries include low- and moderate-income adults and outof-school youth in Amherst who do not have a high school credential or who need more
education and training to improve their skills and prospects. (TLP does not encourage high
school students to drop out and includes "return to high school" among the goals clients can set;
but it provides access to free education to those for whom a return to high school is no longer
feasible.) TLP clients include: single parents; working poor; displaced workers; homemakers
needing to re/enter the workforce; pregnant and parenting teens; people who are homeless,
hungry, in recovery, in need of resources to improve personal health, or court-ordered to attend
GED training; people who are adversely affected by physical or learning disabilities; and those
who are functionally illiterate or whose primary language is not English and who need skills
above the ESOL class level.

The Amherst classroom serves a large proportion of English Language Learners. In FY11, 13 (42%) of the Amherst residents served by TLP spoke English as their primary language and 18 (58%) had a primary language other than English (including Spanish, Portuguese, Khmer, Chichewa, Haitian Creole, Cape Verdean Creole, Yoruba, and Arabic). Amherst client ethnicities and ages for FY11 are detailed in the tables below:

White – 6	
Asian – 3	
Black – 9	
Cape Verdean – 2	
Haitian – 1	***********
Hispanic - 11	

Female - 14				
Male - 17				
Age 16-17 – 7				
Age 18-24 – 8				
Age 25-44 – 10				
Age 45-59 - 5				
Age 60+ - 1				

Why affected population is underserved TLP is the only provider in Amherst of free, integrated learning and work skills services; without TLP programs, residents who need to improve both their academic and work success skills fall through the cracks of existing services. For nonnative English speakers specifically, TLP's services pick up where ESOL services leave off, helping clients to build on newly-acquired basic English skills to achieve the English fluency and cultural fluency they need to pursue education, family-sustaining work and meaningful participation in a new community; and for many of our immigrant clients who come to us with very little formal education, TLP is the only local option for acquiring the academic skills needed to pursue the education and employment that can ensure economic security and self-sufficiency for themselves and their families. The transitions program at the Amherst classroom is presently only funded for 18-21 year olds, and so classroom staff can provide only the most basic stopgap transitions support for other clients, whereas ABE clients of all ages generally need intensive support for successfully navigating their transition to post-secondary education/training and family-sustaining employment.

C. Community Involvement

Process used to select project; how project was responsive to expressed community need During 2002-04, the Community Planning Partnership for Adult Education, funded by Mass. Dept. of Education and comprising TLP, International Language Institute, and Center for New Americans, confirmed the need for ABE services that include transitions support. Using interviews, focus groups, and surveys, the Partnership gathered information from a range of community organizations and individuals. (K1,7,9) At the same time, TLP instructors were seeing a demonstrated need among clients for skill-building instruction and individualized support for meeting the challenges of moving on to college, vocational training, and work. TLP created the transitions program in 2005 in Greenfield with CDBG funds to serve youth, and in 2007 with support of CDBG funds again, the program was expanded to include older clients. Since TLP started its transitions program, it has been implemented in Amherst in years when funding has been available, including with funding from the DTA Literacy Improvement Program and Mass. Woman's Home Missionary Union. The current Action Plan (C38-40), other data discussed above, and TLP/Amherst's contacts with colleagues through the Amherst Human Services Network and the Council of Social Agencies of Hampshire County confirm the ongoing need for these services.

Process that will be used to maintain involvement of project beneficiaries The Transitions Counselor will maintain involvement of current beneficiaries by:

- Assessing each clients educational level, skill needs, education and career goals, and potential barriers to success
- Referring clients to other services as needed, to ensure they get the range of support they need to continue coming to TLP to earn a GED and plan for their next steps

- Providing individualized and group counseling and instruction that meets clients where they are so they can work toward their next steps for example, by helping them start to explore a college major or career field of interest or to build on their plans by completing college and/or job applications, or by helping them develop critical life skills such as financial literacy skills (see source R)
- Posting notices about events and available services

The Transitions Counselor will also conduct systematic follow-up with clients previously served, to: inquire about needed follow-up support for post-secondary or work success or for reenrolling if they had "stopped out" or dropped out; inform them of opportunities of potential interest; track longer-term outcomes.

D. Project Feasibility

1. Evidence to show that community-at-large/beneficiaries will use the project

The TLP Executive Director held a meeting with Amherst site GED students on February 10, 2011, which included discussion of their needs for transitions services (L); student responses document a demand for "extra-curricular" support services to pursue education and career goals and to improve personal and family stability (examples include receiving problem-solving counseling as well as help with career exploration, job search skills, help with accessing post secondary education and jobs, completing applications and forms, and understanding housing and health care requirements). Additionally, TLP/Amherst Site Director Sheila Murphy and Amherst Survival Center Program Director Tracey Levy, in discussing TLP's transitions outreach at the Survival Center, concluded that of the 378 customers served weekly, 238 (65%) are Amherst residents; and of these, 70 (30%) will need the types of education/job search transitions services TLP will offer (support letter attached – source A). Past participation shows consistent demand for TLP/Amherst services, with the site serving more than 30 Amherst residents a year in each of the last 3 years (FY09-FY11). Moreover, FY11 referral sources show that a range of community members and organizations refer people to TLP (source M).

2. Matching/other funds

The budget for implementing the Passport to Success Transitions Program at TLP/Amherst will be \$90,794. TLP's principal funder for many years has been Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), which funds academic classes; TLP is in the 7th year of a multi-year DESE grant, and we anticipate another successful application in the next multi-year grant cycle starting in 2013. The project budget includes \$46,200 in DESE support for TLP/Amherst, for instructional and administrative staff (see "Management Plan" below) and other program expenses. TLP's Executive Director conducts ongoing fundraising among private and corporate foundations, local businesses, and civic organizations to generate the balance of program funds. TLP/Amherst classroom volunteers provide in-kind support; local businesses, private secondary schools, and the community provide added in-kind support (such as school supplies and food and fundraising space).

Projected Mass. DESE funds July 2012-Dec. 2013 - \$46,200

(1.5 years of multi-year grant – copy of current-year contract attached)

Anticipated funds:

Amherst Club Love Notes \$1,000

(documentation of current award attached)

Community fundraising \$2,800

Documentation of TLP bank balance as of 09/08/11 attached.

3. Roles and responsibilities of project personnel as well as internal controls

Transitions counselor Diane Regnery (reports to Site Director) - Conducts outreach; Conducts assessments to set client goals and identify other social service needs; Provides individualized referrals to wraparound services as needed, post-secondary/career/life skills counseling, case management, and group instruction as appropriate to implement transitions program and help clients overcome barriers to success; Maintains client progress files; Tracks outcomes; Writes reports Site director Sheila Murphy (reports to Executive Director) – Conducts outreach and academic assessments; Supervises classroom staff; Oversees site reporting

Instructor Kimberly Hake (reports to Site Director) – Conducts outreach; Teaches classes; Provides academic and life skills counseling

Executive Director (ED)/Program Director Judith Roberts (reports to Board of Directors) – Provides fiscal and program oversight; Supervises Site Directors, Coordinators, and Administrative Coordinator Technology Coordinator Sara MacKay (reports to ED) – Provides computer/network maintenance and training

Volunteer Coordinator/Community Planning Coordinator Margaret Anderson (reports to ED) - Recruits, trains, and supports classroom volunteers; Coordinates publicity and fundraising Administrative Coordinator Susan Beech (reports to ED) - Provides administrative assistance Staff resumes are attached (N).

Internal Controls – The Literacy Projects contracts with Bruce D. Norling, CPA, P.C., whose firm provides an annual comprehensive fiscal audit. There were no findings from the FY10 audit; the FY11 audit is forthcoming.

4. Agency Expertise TLP's expertise in providing comprehensive education/transitions services for ABE clients allows for successful completion of this project within the project timeframe. TLP has provided ABE services since 1984 and is the only provider in Amherst of free, comprehensive services that include integrated and simultaneous education and training providing a bridge to college, vocational training, and work. Since 2005, TLP Transitions Counselors have helped hundreds of clients to overcome barriers that threaten their continuation of GED studies and have guided them in navigating next steps beyond the GED. TLP has received block grant funding in all other towns it operates in, state and federal funding, and private funds to support the transitions program at all its sites, completing all projects within the contracted timeframe.

In FY11:

- TLP served 412 clients in ABE classes with 75 clients (18%) earning a GED. Agency-wide data on transitions outcomes for post-secondary education/training and employment will be available by the September 20 public hearing.
- The Amherst site served 58 clients (31 Amherst residents) in ABE classes and 29 clients (16 Amherst residents) in 6 months of transitions services; 10 clients (17%) earned a GED, 2 enrolled in post-secondary education/training, and 7 obtained a paying job

CDBG funding will ensure the continuation of transitions services for Amherst residents, increasing the Transitions Counselor position to 12 hours a week for clients of all ages from 6 hours for 18-21 year olds in FY11. This level of intensity will enable more residents to achieve their GED, post-secondary and career goals and/or make the significant strides toward them that TLP also tracks (e.g., visiting a community college, registering with the Career Center, writing a resume, completing a post-secondary/job application, and interviewing for a job). The 18-month project timeframe

allows the Transitions Counselor to help clients set and meet goals as their educational and personal readiness allows. TLP has a long history of community collaboration, which is key to providing the comprehensive, coordinated services ABE clients need, while avoiding redundancy in services. Along with the resources already mentioned, TLP/Amherst maintains connections with: the Regional Employment Board/Pathways to MCAS Success; Greenfield Community College Next Step Up program; Holyoke Community College ABE Transition to College and Careers Program; WIA Youthwoks through the Northampton YWCA; Family Outreach of Amherst; Amherst Housing Authority; Community Action (support letter attached - O); Center for New Americans (support letter attached - source P), Mass. Rehabilitation Commission; and Department of Transitional Assistance. TLP/Amherst is fully ADA-compliant and accessible to downtown and bus routes.

5. Program Budget

The program budget is attached.

E. Impact

Impact on identified need: 60 Amherst residents who lack a high school credential or who have outdated post-secondary/job skills will receive services with the Transitions Counselor to help them develop post-secondary success skills and work-readiness so they can pursue economic self-sufficiency in an economy in which more and more jobs need "middle-level" skills. Measurable improvements that will result from the activity: Outcome measures will include the number of participants who are measurably achieving major outcomes related to education and employment as well as activities that lead to completion of major outcomes. TLP tracks the major outcomes of enrolling in a college degree or certificate program, enrolling in job training, and obtaining a job, raise, or promotion; we also track many activities towards completion in these categories, as well as in the categories of personal/family stability and civic participation (list attached – source Q). Of the 60 CDBG-funded transitions clients to be served, we project that on average, each client will complete 2 activities that lead to completion of major outcomes. How much of the need will be addressed: Providing transitions services to 60 Amherst residents will address approximately 10% of the need among the more than 600 residents age 25 and over who lack a high school credential and approximately 4% of the need among those 25 and over who have no more than a high school credential. Projecting from past TLP/Amherst data, English will not be the primary language for at least 50% of CDBG-funded transitions clients (30 people); providing transitions services to this population will address approximately 1% of the potential need for improved English and cultural fluency.

Direct and indirect outcomes: Direct outcomes include the major outcomes and activities discussed under "Measurable improvements" above. A broad range of indirect outcomes result as clients' increased skills and community connections bring benefits that ripple out to their families, the local workforce, and the community. For example: earning a GED, obtaining post-secondary education/training, and obtaining a driver's license all positively impact the ability to work, increasing income and the ability to contribute to the local tax base and business economy; developing financial literacy skills positively impacts the ability to use earned income in ways that promote personal and family stability; increasing their educational levels enables clients raising children to positively impact their children's chances for success in school (F), thus breaking the intergenerational cycle of school dropout and the poverty often associated with it; increasing their skills levels and confidence enables marginalized clients to become invested in their community and participate more meaningfully in a variety of ways, such as joining the local workforce, taking part in community events, using the library, voting, and volunteering.

Adequate adult literacy levels are also associated with improved health and decreased incarceration and recidivism rates (F), making for a healthier and safer community.

Quantitative and qualitative measures: TLP measures individual outcomes by working with each participant to identify education and career goals and develop an individualized curriculum for meeting those goals. Quantitative measures includes: scale-scored, pre-and post-program assessments of participants' academic skills and work readiness; the Accuplacer diagnostic tool to evaluate college readiness; attendance records; and outcomes achievements. Educational progress is assessed using standardized DESE measurements, the Massachusetts Adult Proficiency Test (MAPT), GED pretests and passage rates, and DESE Curriculum Frameworks standards. Qualitative evaluation includes staff observation, maintenance of meeting notes and other client/staff communications in client progress files, and daily and monthly written client self-assessments of progress toward goals. TLP also assesses its programs through monthly site reports of demographic and performance data, annual assessment of TLP data entered into the DESE database, and semi-annual client surveys.

F. Evaluation

Short-term goals (includes projected service numbers for each of Quarters 1-6)

- Q1 (Sept.*): Conduct recruitment outreach with up to 20 former clients who stopped their program participation while still in need of services.
- Q1: Conduct recruitment outreach through local media, social service agencies, etc. (ongoing as needed).
- Q1: Serve 7 new clients.
- Q2 (Oct-Dec): Serve 16 new clients as well as continuing clients as needed.
- Q3 (Jan-Mar): Serve 14 new clients as well as continuing clients as needed.
- Q4 (Apr-Jun): Serve 7 new clients as well as continuing clients as needed.
- O5 (Sept.): Serve 7 new clients as well as continuing clients as needed.
- Q6 (Oct-Dec): Serve 9 new clients as well as continuing clients as needed.
- *TLP is closed during July and August.

Long-term goals

By the end of the grant period:

- 60 Amherst residents will have benefited from transitions services.
- On average, each client will complete 2 activities that lead to completion of the following major outcomes: enroll in a college degree or certificate program, enroll in job training, obtain a job, raise, or promotion. (Q)

Changes in the target population that indicate program success are the achievement of major outcomes and activities discussed above. To measure these changes, TLP will:

- Track completion of activities and achievement of major outcomes
- Produce monthly and annual reports for tracking outcomes data agency-wide
- Produce quarterly and annual CDBG reports
- Solicit qualitative program assessment from clients during counseling/other meetings
- Administer a semi-annual client survey to assess satisfaction and self-perception of progress.

Client achievements will decrease the municipality's responsibility to this target population as clients move toward economic security and self-sufficiency, thus reducing and ultimately eliminating their need for emergency/public assistance. TLP is undertaking an agency-wide initiative to have the Transitions Coordinator, a position created in FY11, systematize and oversee the process of tracking impact over time through documentation of longer-term post-secondary and employment outcomes of TLP GED graduates. Additional beneficiaries are the

families, employers, and community members who benefit as clients contribute more productively to family life, the workforce, and the community. In referring clients to other needed services, and in conducting outreach with local agencies to obtain client referrals, TLP's transitions program is linked *to other community human/social services* as an integral part of a community safety net of services (C67-68) that all work together, avoiding duplication of service while helping to meet the full range of needs each client must address in order to achieve self-sufficiency (see "Agency Expertise" above for a list of local agencies with which TLP maintains connections).

G. Agency Information

TLP has provided adult basic education/transitions services since 1984 and has operated a classroom in Amherst since 1995. Starting in 2005, in response to demonstrated student need as well as research confirming that ABE students need extra support for moving on to post-secondary education/training and family-sustaining work, TLP intensified its provision of transitions services by creating the on-site transitions program with CDBG and other funding (for several years in Amherst, this included DTA Literacy Improvement Program funds and a Mass. Woman's Home Missionary Union grant), completing all projects within the contracted timeframe. Instructional staff and Transitions Counselors are experienced in working with the target population (see staff resumes – source N). Since 2005, TLP Transitions Counselors have helped hundreds of clients overcome barriers that threaten their continuation of GED studies and guided them in navigating next steps beyond the GED. Staff continually increase their expertise through professional development at monthly staff meetings and through other opportunities. Selected agency data for the last 3 years demonstrate TLP's effectiveness in providing these services:

Outcome	FY11	FY10	FY09 67 (15%)	
Earned a GED	75 (18%)	53 (12%)		
Enrolled in post-secondary education or transition to college program/took a college course	Forthcoming*	39	33	
Obtained a job/promotion/ better job	Forthcoming*	35	46	
Conducted a job search	Forthcoming*	63	61	

^{*}Transitions outcomes agency-wide data will be available by the September 20 public hearing.





September 1, 2011

Amherst Planning Department Amherst Town Hall, 2nd Floor 4 Boltwood Avenue Amherst, MA 01002

Dear Amherst Planning Department,

We are writing to indicate our great interest in collaborating with The Literacy Project's *Transitions Program*.

The Amherst Survival Center is an organization committed to providing for the basic needs of low-income residents of Amherst and the surrounding area. One of our major strategies in fulfilling our mission is to partner with other organizations offering services to help our clients move beyond a condition of need to a state of greater self-sufficiency.

We are very excited about the Literacy Project's proposal to have a counselor active in Amherst, including some hours at the Amherst Survival Center.

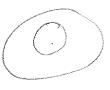
Please feel free to contact me if you would like more information.

Sincerely,

CL C. Joll

Cheryl Zoll, Executive Director





BUILDING ON THE STRENGTH OF OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 1965

CHILD CARE OUTLOOK

Child Care Subsidy Parent Referral and Education

COMMUNITY SERVICES
Resource Centers
Center for Self-Reliance Food Pantries
First Call for Help
Healthy Connections
Housing Assistance Services

ENERGY PROGRAMS Electric Efficiency Audits Fuel Assistance Heating System Repair Weatherization

FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS
Family Learning Center
Franklin County Family Network
Healthy Families
Massachusetts Family Center
The Parent-Child Home Program

THE MEDIATION &

TRAINING COLLABORATIVE
Community Crisis Response Team
Divorce Mediation
Family Mediation
Housing Mediation
School Mediation
Small Claims Mediation
Workplace Mediation
Mediation Training

PARENT-CHILD

DEVELOPMENT CENTER Center-based Care Family Child Care Head Start/Early Head Start

SPECIAL PROJECTS
CommonCents
Community Projects
Economic Inequality Conference
Financial Education
Franklin County Resource Network
Free Tax Assistance Program

WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN Breastfeeding Support Nutrition Screening and Education Supplemental Food

YOUTH PROGRAMS
Leadership Development
Employment Readiness
Community Service and Engagement
Diversity Support
Communities that Care Coalition

September 8, 2011

Judith Roberts, Executive Director The Literacy Project 15 Bank Row, Suite C Greenfield, MA 01301

Dear Judith,

It is our pleasure to write this letter of support for your application for Town of Amherst CDBG funding for the Transitions Program at The Literacy Project's Amherst classroom. As the federally-designated Community Action Agency for Hampshire and Franklin Counties, Community Action is dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with lower incomes. In Amherst and its surrounding communities, we provide a number of different services, including Head Start, Early Head Start, licensed child care, child care subsidies, Fuel Assistance, energy conservation, mediation, support for victims of crime, information and referral, teen parenting education and support (Healthy Familles), WIC, free tax assistance, individual development accounts, and youth services. Community Action serves more than 1000 residents of Amherst each year.

The Literacy Project's Transitions Program provides support and educational services to people who have dropped out of high school for a variety of reasons. Whether for a 16-year old who has dropped out and had a child, or a 45-year old grandmother who is finally able to pursue her life dream, there are many challenges that pull students away from their goals. The Literacy Project's Transitions Counselor helps students find the services and resources they need to support their success in moving toward their academic and career goals, and helps them map out a course that is achievable so they can move forward with confidence, which makes them more likely to succeed.

Community Action is proud to work in partnership with The Literacy Project (TLP), and will continue to refer our program participants to TLP and collaborate with the Transitions Counselor to provide the best possible support for TLP students.

Sincerely,

Mary McEneany

Interim Executive Director

Community Action is a non-profit organization that helps the entire community by promoting economic justice and improving the quality of life for people with lower incomes.

Franklin County main office: 393 Main Street, Greenfield, Massachusetts 01301 Phone/TTY: 413.774.2318 • Fax: 413.773.3834

Hampshire County main office: 56 Vernon Street, Northampton, Massachusetts 01060 Phone/TTY: 413.582.4230 • Fax: 413.582.4248

> North Quabbin main office: 167 South Main Street, Orange, Massachusetts 01364 Phone: 978.544,5423 ♦ Fax: 978,544,2805

> > info@communityaction.us + www.communityaction.us





A community based, nonprofit, Adult Basic Education Program serving immigrants, refugees, and migrants with classrooms in Amherst, Greenfield, and Northampton,

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September 12, 2011

Amherst Planning Department Amherst Town Hall 4 Boltwood Avenue Amherst, MA 01002

Dear Planning Department Members,

Please accept this letter of support for The Literacy Project's proposal to the Town of Amherst for CDBG funding.

Center for New Americans and The Literacy Project work in partnership to provide a spectrum of services for immigrants, particularly those who are low-income. Many immigrants enroll in CNA's classes in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), gain confidence as they increase their proficiency in English, and decide to continue their education.

They then enroll in classes with The Literacy Project, and may pursue a GED with an eye toward going to college. Or, they may be low-literacy adults who received very little schooling in their home countries. This could be a function of war-time disruptions to the education system, or it could be a function of economic realities that dictated that they enter the workforce early. In either case, once they feel sufficiently competent in English, they may pursue classes at TLP in order to learn to read and write.

What is most important is that these organizations complement each others' programs and offer a progression of services to residents who have few alternatives. It is in the community's best long-term interests to support both of these vital programs.

Sincerely,

Jim Ayres

Executive Director



9/7/2011 Richart Keller, AICP 120 Pulpit Hill Road #25 Amherst, MA 01002 413 835-0011 401 486-2677(c) richart.keller@gmail.com

Financial Literacy Proposal for The Literacy Project

Financial literacy is widely recognized as one of the most important life skills a person needs. However, much of our financial behavior and our knowledge of basic financial tools are learned from influences in our upbringing and our environment—family, friends, advertisements, etc. This is particularly problematic for those with little means and/or those beginning to deal with their own finances.

TLP proposes integrating financial education into its transition program. The goals of this approach are to empower students to make sound financial choices which reflect their particular situation and needs, to increase their awareness of available resources which can be helpful to them, and to be better equipped to avoid financial products and services which are excessively costly and/or risky. Underlying this program will be the recognition of the importance of behavior in financial decisions.

The sessions will begin by offering weekly workshops designed to increase participants' awareness of their money values, attitudes and emotions, and to understand the difference between 'wants versus needs'. Subsequent session will focus on building basic skills:

- 1. Making (and sticking to) a budget or spending plan,
- 2. Controlling and reducing spending,
- 3. Managing credit, including understanding credit reports and scores,
- 4. Handling debt and bankruptcy, and
- 5. Accessing and using financial products and services.

These will include special attention to topics of particular interest to the students: for example, making major purchases such as a car or a house, ways of keeping track of finances, rebuilding (or building) credit, saving money, and getting a loan.

PROJECT BUDGET FORM

Massachusetts CDBG Program FY12- Amherst - Human Service Funding Application

Program Name: The Literacy Project Passport to Success Transitions Program

Program Period:

12 MONTHS

July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013

PERSONNEL Position:	Hourly Rate	Hours Per Week	# Weeks	Total Program Cost	CDBG Cost	Non- CDBG Cost
Transitions Counselor	\$ 18.54	18	42	14,016	11,680	2,336
Program Director	\$ 37.38	6	42	9,420	2,355	7,065
Site Director	\$ 19.04	9	42	7,197	-	7,197
Site Instructor	\$ 18.54	9	42	7,008	••	7,008
Technology Coordinator	\$ 20.69	9	42	7,821	3,910	3,910
TOTAL SALARY				45,462	17,945	27,516
Benefits at 15 %				6,819	2,692	4,127
Taxes at 12 %				5,455	2,153	3,302
TOTAL PERSONNEL				57,737	22,791	34,945
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS						
Rent, utilities				12,600	2,100	10,500
Telephone				1,100		1,100
Insurance				,		
Postage				200	-	200
Supplies and materials				500	250	250
Travel/mileage	6.0			500	250	250
Consultants						
Accounting						
Reproduction/printing				700		700
Advertising				250		250
Community events			in the second			
other: Student Transportation					350	(350)
other: Equipment/computers				3,000	1,500	1,500
other: GED test fees	0.000			650	325	325
other: Educational materials				1,000	425	575_
other: Educational field trips				500	500	_
other: Student food				900	350	550
other: Operating expenses				11,157	1,302	9,855
TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE				33,057	7,352	25,705
TOTAL PROGRAM COSTS	1960 US - 1882 1988 1964 - 1882 1984 188			90,794	<u>30,143</u>	60,650



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As of 8/1/11

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Term Expires: February 2011

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Term Expires: March 2012

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Term Expires: January 2013

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Affiliation: Social Worker

Term Expires: September 2012

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Westhampton, MA

Affiliation: School Counselor Term Expires: October 2012

The Literacy Project Organizational Chart

